



Glossary

Note: “Group” as it is used in this glossary generally refers to people who may be associated with each other according to gender, race, sexual orientation, age, religion, or physical (dis)abilities.

Apprenticeship—Method of training in which a student is placed with a highly skilled worker to learn a specific trade; it generally involves the combination of class time and hands-on training and requires a written agreement among the school, student, and employer.

Backlash—Retaliation, fear, and anger against certain groups such as women, people of color, gays/lesbians, and people with disabilities.

Bias—Behaviors resulting from the spoken or unspoken assumption that one person is superior to the other.

Bisexual—A person whose social, sexual, and/or committed intimate relationships are formed with people of either gender.

Career stereotype—A belief that certain careers are only for people who meet certain characteristics such as gender, age, ethnicity, or other factors.

Culture—The way of believing, feeling, and behaving as a group of people, including their values and customs.

Cultural awareness—Consciousness of cultural similarities and differences, and awareness of one’s own cultural heritage and that of others.

Discrimination—Any action that limits or denies opportunities, privileges, roles, or rewards on the basis of a person’s gender, age, ethnicity, or other factors.

Equality—Equal and fair.

Equity—Equal distribution of encouragement, opportunity, privileges, and rights to everyone; freedom from bias or favoritism.

Ethnicity—A group of people having common customs, characteristics, culture, language, etc.

Gender—One’s sex (male or female).

Gender equity—Fair treatment to both males and females.

Gender norms—What is considered as appropriate behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes for males and females, as decided by a society.

Gender roles—A set of behaviors based on gender that make up a role, such as that of a father or mother.

Hate crimes—Serious, illegal, and harmful acts directed at targeted individuals or groups based on gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, and/or other factors.

Heterosexual—Also referred to as “straight”; an individual whose social, sexual, and/or committed intimate relationships are formed with members of the other gender.

Heterosexism—Prejudice exhibited by powerful institutions such as the government, banks, insurance companies, that creates and maintains a system of benefits and privileges for heterosexual people that are denied to same sex couples. Examples: health coverage and tax breaks for married heterosexual partners.

Homophobia—The irrational fear, intolerance, and hatred that some heterosexual people have of homosexuality and homosexual people.

Homosexual—A person whose social, sexual, and/or committed intimate relationships are formed with people of the same gender. Homosexual men refer to themselves as “gay.” Homosexual women refer to themselves as “lesbian.”

Hostile work environment—A work or school environment where fair treatment by employees is absent because of individual and/or institutional prejudice.

Sexist humor—Jokes, stories, cartoons, etc. that demonstrate gender prejudice.

Mentor—A role model who provides guidance, knowledge, and support; mentors can be teachers, relatives, community members, and peers.

Nontraditional career—A professional, technical, or skilled job in which individuals from one gender comprise less than 25 percent of the individuals employed.

Occupational segregation—When certain occupations are dominated by one gender.

Partnership skills—Skills that teach men and women to work together.

Prejudice—A strong attitude, opinion, or feeling formed about someone or a group of people without adequate knowledge or understanding.

Race—People in one of the major groups of society who are distinguished by certain physical characteristics usually skin color.

Note: Major race groups in the United States include Latino, African American, Asian, Native American, and Caucasian.

Racism—Racial prejudice and discrimination.

Self-esteem—The quality of seeing ourselves as worthwhile, competent, and deserving.

Sexism—Gender prejudice that is usually directed at women and is often combines with institutional power to create and maintain a system of privileges and benefits for males.

Sexual orientation (identity)—The gender (sex) with which one is most likely to direct one's social, sexual, and intimate connections and relationships.

Sexual harassment—Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual innuendo—Verbal or written statements that imply subjects of a sexual nature.

Socioeconomic class—The group one belongs based on family income, resources, and access to money and education.

Stereotype—An oversimplified generalization about a group, which is often negative or derogatory.

Tokenism—the act of making a small, often symbolic gesture by a business or organization to satisfy the demands of an oppressed group, such as hiring a woman as a result of the demands by a women's rights group, but not doing more to provide opportunities for other women.

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